

DEPARTMENT of the INTERIOR

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

news release

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REED ANNOUNCES DETAILS OF BICENTENNIAL FUND HERITAGE PROGRAM FOR NATIONAL PARKS AND FISH AND WILDLIFE REFUGES

Assistant Secretary of the Interior Nathaniel P. Reed today spelled out which lands will be acquired with the first \$141 million of the \$1.5 billion Bicentennial Land Heritage Program recently announced by President Gerald R. Ford. The President earlier in the day transmitted legislation to Congress to accomplish the program.

The \$141 million requested for appropriation to the Department of the Interior's National Park Service, and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in Fiscal Year 1977 will launch the 10-year program to expand and rehabilitate the Nation's National Parks, wildlife refuges, recreation areas, urban parks, historic and archeological sites.

This appropriation, as requested, will provide \$110 million to acquire lands in authorized areas of the National Park System, and \$31 million to be used for acquisition of wildlife refuge lands.

NATIONAL PARK SYSTEMS

Eleven areas of the National Park System will benefit from this fund request. They range from \$627,000 to organize a land acquisition program and prepare initial land appraisals along the 2,000-mile Appalachian National Scenic Trail in the eastern states to \$37,391,000 to purchase the 49,534 acres of Texas' Big Thicket National Preserve not covered by previous budgeting.

Other examples in the National Park System are:

Big Cypress National Preserve, Florida, a watershed vital to Everglades National Park, \$30,000,000.

Cuyahoga Valley National Recreation Area, Ohio, which preserves the rural character of the river valley between the industrial cities of Akron and Cleveland, \$18,700,000.

Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area, Pennsylvania-New Jersey, which conserves unspoiled land on both sides of the Delaware River, \$2,495,000.

Included are two significant historical areas authorized this year, Valley Forge National Historical Park, Pennsylvania and Klondike Gold Rush National Historical Park, Alaska.

FISH AND WILDLIFE ACQUISITIONS

Expenditures of the \$31 million to be used for acquisition of 111,000 acres of unique and valuable wildlife habitat will focus on endangered species, additions to existing wildlife refuges, and acquisition of inholdings in existing refuges.

(more)

The largest amounts, both in terms of dollars and acres, will benefit endangered species.

More than half the \$31 million total, \$16.25 million, will be spent for this purpose. Nearly 67,000 acres are involved, with the largest amount, 56,000 acres going to further protect the gravely endangered California Condor.

Other endangered species involved are Hawaiian waterbirds, the Delmarva Fox Squirrel in Maryland, the Mississippi Sandhill Crane, the Dusky Seaside Sparrow in Florida, and the Indiana Bat in Kentucky and West Virginia.

Additions to existing refuges in 12 states will cost \$12.8 million and will involve 40,405 acres.

Acquisition of inholding in refuges located in 13 states will require \$2.55 million and will be made up of parcels totaling 4,750 acres.

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